

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

IO-10 SAM-01 /069 W

----- 109770

P R 150928Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4862

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, PLO, LE, XF

SUBJECT: SYRIA AND PLO DECIDE NOT TO ATTEND ARAB FOREIGN  
MINISTERS CONFERENCE

1. OFFICIAL SARG SPOKESMAN CONFIRMED EVENING OCT. 14 THAT SYRIA WOULD NOT ATTEND CAIRO CONFERENCE. "SYRIA CONSIDERS IT PREFERABLE," HE SAID, "FOR ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS TO MEET IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH SINAI AGREEMENT BECAUSE IT CONSTITUTES BACKGROUND FOR LEBANESE EVENTS. SYRIA CONSIDERS THAT ON ARAB LEVEL ROOT OF PROBLEM SHOULD BE TREATED FIRST RATHER THAN ITS BRANCEHS."

2. OCT. 15 AL-THAWRAH REPORTED THAT SYRIA AND PLO HAD DECIDED NOT TO ATTEND CAIRO CONFERENCE. AL-THAWRAH ADDED THAT "LEBANESE NATIONALIST AND PROGRESSIVE PARTIES CALLED UPON ARAB STATES TO ADOPT POSITION OF PLO AND LEBANESE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT REJECTING ARABIZATION OF PROBLEM AND URGED ARAB STATES TO WITHDRAW FROM MEETING." AL-BAATH

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QUOTED PLO AS SAYING THAT GOAL OF CAIRO CONFERENCE

WAS TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM SINAI AGREEMENT.

3. COMMENT: WHILE SYRIAN OFFICIAL STATEMENT SIMPLY ANNOUNCED THAT SARG DELEGATION WOULD NOT ATTEND CONFERENCE, IT SEEMS LOGICAL FROM MEDIA TREATMENT THAT SYRIAN AND PLO POSITIONS WERE COORDINATED IN ADVANCE, THOUGH THEIR REASONS FOR NOT GOING MAY HAVE DIFFERED SOMEWHAT. PLO HAS NO WISH TO SEE ARAB STATES DEBATE PRESENCE AND STATUS OF PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON, WHEREAS SYRIA SEES CAIRO MEETING AS AN ASCERTION THAT ITS OWN MEDIATION EFFORTS IN LEBANON HAVE PROVED INADEQUATE. BEYOND THAT, HOWEVER, BOTH PLO AND SYRIA PROBABLY SEE CAIRO CONVOKING OF CONFERENCE AS IMPLICITY UNDERMINING THEIR CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT ACCORD AND BRING PRESSURE ON EGYPT TO ABROGATE IT. THEY WOULD CLEARLY HAVE PREFERRED THAT CAIRO MEETING NOT BE HELD.  
MURPHY

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 15 OCT 1975  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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